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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------|-------------|---------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 09/626,636 | 07/27/2000 | Gary Karlin Michelson M D | 102.0003-04000 | 6124 |

22882 7590 02/12/2007
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| EXAMINER |
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HO, UYEN T

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| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
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3731

| SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE | MAIL DATE | DELIVERY MODE |
|--|------------|---------------|
| 3 MONTHS | 02/12/2007 | PAPER |

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/626,636

Applicant(s)

MICHELSON M D, GARY KARLIN

Examiner

(Jackie) Tan-Uyen T. Ho

Art Unit

3731

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 November 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 172-176, 178-256, 258-276 and 278-343 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 185-189, 196-200, 203-206, 227-236 and 239-246 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 172-176, 178-184, 190-195, 201, 202, 207-226, 237, 238, 247-256, 258-276, 278-343 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: _____

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments have been considered but do not place the application in condition for allowance. Regarding newly added limitation "...said guard having a concave curvature in a plane parallel to the mid-longitudinal axis of said guard to approximate the contour of the face of the adjacent vertebral bodies..." The guards of the cited references are cylindrical thus they all have concave curvature in a plane parallel to the mid-longitudinal axis of the guard.
2. The indicated allowability of claims is withdrawn in view of Kuslich (5,015,255) and Kuslich et al. (5,489,307). Rejections based on the cited reference(s) follow.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 172-176, 178-184, 190-195, 201, 202, 207-226, 237, 238, 247-256, 258-2796, 278-343 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuslich (5,015,255) in view of Cozad (5,049,150). Kuslich discloses a guard (24), a distractor (fig. 5), a cap/an impact end member/footplate (figs. 6, 7); openings (35, fig. 11), spinal implants (103, col. 8, lines 48-60), the size of the guard (col. 9, line 10 to col. 10, lines 32), and an implant driver (inherent feature since the bone chips need to be impacted into the cavity). Kuslich fails to disclose engaging portions and flat portions between

Art Unit: 3731

the engaging portions as claimed. Cozad disclose guard for bone surgery and including engaging portions and flat portions as claimed (fig. 1) for preventing over-penetration of the engaging portions into bone. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ the engaging portion and flat portions in view of Cozad into Kuslich's guard sleeve (104) in order to provide an engage mechanism that prevent the guard from moving so that the insertion could be more accurate.

Regarding the implant driver and implant having structure as claimed, Kuslich (5,015,255) in view of Cozad (5,049,150) further in view of Kuslich et al. (5,489,307). Although, Kuslich '255 does not disclose an implant and an implant driver having structure as claimed, attention is directed to Kuslich et al. '307 reference which discloses an implant and an implant driver as claimed. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ an implant and an implant driver in view of Kuslich et al. '307 into the apparatus of Kuslich et al. in view of Cozad in order to increase the probability of a successful fusion (see the motivation in Kuslich et al. '307 reference, col. 1, lines 27-39).

5. Claims 172-184, 201, 202, 247-269, 276, 278-288, 331-343 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ma et al. (3,848,601) further in view of a well known in the art. Ma et al. disclose all the limitations of the claims except for a presence of a flat portion between spine engaging portions. Although, Ma et al. disclose the depth limit configuration does not including a flat portion between the engaging portions or penetrating portions, it is known in the art to have depth limit

Art Unit: 3731

configuration including a flat portion between the engaging portions of penetrating portions (see Staubli 5,058,275). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ a flat portion between penetration portions of the chisel of Ma et al.'s device for limit the depth penetration of the chisel. Doing so would amount to mere substitution of one configuration for another configuration within the art that would perform equally well in the Ma et al.'s device.

6. Claims 172-184, 201, 202, 247-269, 276, 278-288, 331-343 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Codman (Signature Series 4) in view of Cozad (5,049,150). Codman disclose all the limitations of the claims except for a presence of the engaging portions do not substantially increase the outer cross sectional dimension of the guard near the distal end of the guard. It is well known in the art to have a guide sleeve having penetrating members and a flat portion formed integrally with the sleeve for example, Cozad reference discloses engaging portion do not substantially increase the outer cross sectional dimension of the guard and formed integrally with the sleeve. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Codman reference by having the a guide sleeve having penetrating members and a flat portion formed integrally with the sleeve to reduce the step of making and material for forming a guide sleeve.

Art Unit: 3731

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to (Jackie) Tan-Uyen T. Ho whose telephone number is 571-272-4696. The examiner can normally be reached on MULTIFLEX Mon. to Sat..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, ANHTUAN NGUYEN can be reached on 571-272-4963. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



(Jackie) Tan-Uyen T. Ho
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3731

February 5, 2007